

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OES-06 ACDA-07 NRC-05 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 HEW-04
/101 W

----- 062492 /62

R 202348Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4292
USUN NEW YORK 2305
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION GENEVA
INFO USERDA WASHDC
USERDA GERMANTOWN MD

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TBIO, SWEL, JA, WHO, UNESCO, UNGA
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON NUCLEAR BOMBINGS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI

1. JAPANESE NEWSPAPERS HAVE REPORTED THAT AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE EFFECTS OF A-BOMBS ON POPULATIONS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI IS BEING PLANNED FOR AUGUST 1977 IN THESE TWO CITIES. PRINCIPAL SPONSOR IS JAPAN COUNCIL OF SUFFERERS OF ATOMIC BOMBS (HIDANKYO), WHICH IS PURPORTED TO HAVE ASKED UN HEADQUARTERS TO ORGANIZE SYMPOSIUM. REQUEST WAS SAID TO HAVE BEEN APPROVED AT AN NGO SPECIAL DISARMAMENT COMMITTEE SESSION LAST FEBRUARY. UN SECRETARIAT, WHO, AND UNESCO ARE REPORTED TO HAVE "INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE". UN NGO IS TO SELECT "SCORES OF THE WORLD'S TOP-RANKING MEDICAL, SOCIOLOGY, AND OTHER EXPERTS" FOR SYMPOSIUM, ACCORDING TO PRESS.

2. U.S.-JAPAN BINATIONAL SUCCESSOR TO ABCC, RADIATION EFFECTS
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RESEARCH FOUNDATION, HAS TOLD EMBASSY THAT NEWS OF SYMPOSIUM CAME AS SURPRISE AND THAT MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELFARE (GOJ FUNDING AGENCY FOR RERF) INTENDS TO PLAY NO PART IN SYMPOSIUM. CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED BY RERF THAT SYMPOSIUM WILL INTERFERE WITH ITS OPERATIONS, SINCE ONE OF OBJECTIVES OF MEETING WILL BE TO PERFORM PATHOLOGICAL STUDY OF A-BOMB VICTIMS' CLINICAL

RECORDS AND OTHER DATA, THE BEST SOURCE OF WHICH WOULD BE RERF.

3. UN BUREAU OF FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHEN ASKED BY EMBASSY FOR ITS REACTION TO NEWS STORY, COULD FIND NO RECORD OF ANY FORMAL DECISION BY A UN AGENCY INDICATING SPONSORSHIP OF SUCH A SYMPOSIUM. MOFA CONSTRUCTS HISTORY AS FOLLOWS: UNGA RESOLUTION 3484B OF 1975, ON REVIEW OF THE UN ROLE IN DISARMAMENT, CALLED FOR COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS BY GOVERNMENTS ON ACTIONS THAT COULD BE TAKEN TO PROMOTE DISARMAMENT. AD HOC COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT OF UN NGO MET IN GENEVA ON 2/3/76 AND ADOPTED RESOLUTION TO EFFECT THAT MEMBERS SHOULD STUDY POSSIBILITY OF HOLDING INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON EFFECTS OF A-BOMBS WHICH WOULD INVITE WIDE RANGE OF REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS, INCLUDING MEDICAL EXPERTS. UN NGO AT ITS 13TH CONFERENCE IN GENEVA 3/16-19 DECIDED THAT NGO'S IN EACH MEMBER COUNTRY SHOULD CONVEY THEIR VIEWS ON DISARMAMENT MATTERS TO THEIR INDIVIDUAL GOVERNMENTS FOR INCORPORATION INTO NATIONAL PROPOSALS, WHICH WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO UN SEC GEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNGA RESOLUTION. MOFA LEARNED THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF JAPAN COUNCIL AGAINST ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN BOMBS (GENSUIKYO), A COMMUNIST-AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION, HAD ATTENDED UN NGO MEETING. THIS ORGANIZATION THEN SUBMITTED A PAPER TO MOFA WHICH DUPLICATED PAPER ALREADY GIVEN BY GENSUIKYO TO UN SEC GEN. GOJ ULTIMATELY DECLINED TO INCLUDE GENSUIKYO POSITION IN OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO UNGA RESOLUTION. MOFA POINTS OUT THAT ITS RECORDS MAY BE INCOMPLETE SINCE IT OFTEN DOES NOT OBTAIN DOCUMENTATION OF UN NGO MEETINGS AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

4. COMMENT: PROPOSED SYMPOSIUM SEEMS TO BE ONE MORE STEP IN ATTEMPTS BY COMMUNIST AND LEFT-WING SOCIALIST GROUPS, AS WELL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AS LESS POLITICALLY INCLINED CONSUMER ORGANIZATIONS, IN JAPAN TO ATTRACT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INTEREST TO SURVIVORS OF A-BOMBINGS. OTHER RECENT ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN VISIT OF MAYORS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI TO U.S. AND UN HEADQUARTERS, AND SUPPORT OF EFFORTS TO SEND JAPANESE DOCTORYS TO U.S. TO EXAMINE SURVIVORS NOW LIVING THERE.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE HEARING FROM ADDRESSEES IF THEY HAVE RECORDS OR VIEWS WHICH BEAR ON PROPOSED SYMPOSIUM.
HODGSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, SOCIAL SERVICES, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, NUCLEAR WARFARE, MEETING DELEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 DEC 1976
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TOKYO18553
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760466-0399
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761226/aaaaawtp.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by hartledg>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON NUCLEAR BOMBINGS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI
TAGS: TBIO, SWEL, JA, WHO, UNESCO, UNGA
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006